

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Public Utilities Commission

Minutes of Open Meeting Held on March 30, 2020

An Open Meeting of the Public Utilities Commission was held on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 2:00 P.M. in Hearing Room A, 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island to discuss, deliberate, and/or vote on the following dockets

In attendance: Chairperson Margaret Curran, Todd Bianco and Luly Massaro. Remotely via teleconference: Commissioner Marion Gold, Commissioner Anthony, Patricia Lucarelli, Margaret Hogan, Cynthia Wilson-Frias and Alan Nault.

Chairperson Curran called the Open Meeting to order at 2:05 P.M. A quorum was present.

I. **Docket No. 5022 – Suspension of Service Terminations and Certain Collections Activities During the COVID-19 Emergency** – At this Open Meeting, the PUC discussed and review the responses and comments received in response to its March 16, 2020 order and notice to solicit comments on whether the emergency order should be continued or modified. The following motions were made:

- a) Chairperson Curran moved that pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-1-32(a), public safety requires the continuation of the March 16, 2020 order, of temporary duration, to protect the welfare of the people. Commissioner Gold seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**
- b) Chairperson Curran moved that effective through April 15, 2020, all electric, natural gas, water, and sewer utilities shall continue the cessation of certain collections activities, as set forth herein, including termination of service for nonpayment. Commissioner Gold seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**
- c) Chairperson Curran moved that the PUC invite public comment to be submitted by April 10, 2020 on whether to extend this order with respect to nonresidential customers beyond April 15, 2020. Commissioner Anthony seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**
- d) Chairperson Curran moved that the utilities should provide the following information to the following questions by April 10, 2020:
 - i. Whether collections have dropped off for nonresidential customers over the past two weeks compared to prior months and prior years?
 - ii. If so, please quantify the extent of the reduction.
 - iii. What effect has any such reduction had on the utility’s cash flow?
 - iv. Has the utility been unable to meet any obligations, or does it expect to be unable to meet any financial obligations in the next two weeks if it cannot commence termination of service as a collections option?

Commissioner Gold seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**

II. **Docket No. 5011 – The Narragansett Electric Co. d/b/a National Grid** – This docket is related to a Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) executed by and between National Grid and Gravel Pit Solar II, LLC. The PPA was submitted for review and approval pursuant to the Long-Term Contracting Standard for Renewable Energy, R.I. Gen. Laws §39-26.1.1. et seq. National Grid sought review and approval of the twenty-year PPA under which National Grid will purchase 99 percent of the energy and environmental attributes associated with Gravel Pit’s 50 MW solar facility. After review of the record, the PUC considered the following issues:

- a) Motion for Protective Order of Confidential Information – Chairperson Curran granted National Grid’s motion for protective treatment of the Company's responses to data requests PUC 2-1 and PUC 2-2 and denied Gravel Pit Solar’s motion for protective treatment of Schedule NG-1.
- b) Purchase Power Agreement - Commissioner Gold moved to find that:
 - i. The PPA is commercially reasonable as required under R.I.G.L 39-26.1-3(b)
 - ii. The PPA resulted from a process comporting with the Long-Term Contracting Act (LTC Act) requirements as required by 39-26.1-3(b)
 - iii. the PPA is consistent with the purposes of the LTC Act as required by 39-26.1-3(b)
 - iv. At the time of the evaluation, the process used industry standard forecasting methodologies and the pricing of the PPA was below the market price of energy and renewable energy certificates over the term of the contract as required by 39-26-.1-3(f)
 - v. The PPA provides other direct other direct economic benefits to Rhode Island as job creation and other benefits.Chairperson Curran seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**
- c) Remuneration – Commissioner Anthony moved that the PUC not authorize the Company to receive automatic remuneration under the Long Term Contract Standard for contracting capacity exceeding 90 MW. Commissioner Gold seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**

III. The Open Meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M. A video of the Open Meeting discussion can be accessed at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/WqQyXw296dg>